



Kay Fulcher

Serving The
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Walking with Kay

By Fiona Baker, after her recent visit to the Solomons.



The markets open early along the foreshore of Gizo Island. Some of the vendors have just slept the night on the ground beside their wares to keep them safe. The morning light reveals the intense colours in the myriad of fruit and vegetables available. Fish mongers swish the ends of bulrushes relentlessly over their retro coloured fish (available for \$2 Aus) to keep away the flies. Pawpaw, pineapple, coconuts, fresh vegies, nuts, cakes and breads are available for purchase, and many come from surrounding islands to buy and sell. We buy a fresh coconut each and wander

along drinking the sweet milk through a straw.

As we walk, people stop to talk to Kay. Jeremiah tells her of his grandson who is in a serious condition in the local hospital, and immediately we alter our plans and direction to visit the boy. We sit outside at first, as doctors examine him and consult with his mother. Then, as we walk through to his bed, we become aware of the stark contrast between this hospital building and system and what we are used to in Australia. It is hot, dusty, cramped and clearly limited in resources.

The many other patients and visitors in the room watch as Kay speaks with and comforts the boy's mother, as she quietly hands her some money to buy fresh fruit or whatever is needed (no hospital meals are provided here), and as she places her hands on the boy and prays aloud for his recovery. Several days later Jeremiah tells us that his grandson has improved greatly, and will soon return home.



Many more approach Kay as we walk along the streets of Gizo, seeking conversation and prayer for themselves and for others within the community. It is a very real and important ministry for Kay – and lives are being touched as she responds obediently to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in her interactions.

Many also come to call on Kay at the home of Hall and Dora, who have prepared a room for her to stay in each time she visits Gizo. Hall - the National Superintendent of the Wesleyan Methodist church in the Solomon Islands – supports Kay greatly in

her work, as does Dora, who works constantly to meet the needs of her family and visitors. Their hospitality and company, prayers and support are a blessing to Kay.

As we sit with Hall and Dora, Kay rises to warmly greet another visitor at the door. It is Thomson, who pastors the church in Maravari on Vella Lavella Island, and his wife Grace. Three years ago Thomson had sat before Kay in tears, telling of his great desire to grow in his knowledge of the Scriptures and in spiritual understanding, and asking her to pray over him that he would be effective in his work for the church. Now, he and Grace excitedly tell of all that has been happening among the congregation. His passion for his ministry is evident, as is the hand Kay has had in supporting it. We are reminded of just how important her role as teacher, lecturer and mentor is here in the Solomon Islands.



Kay is passionate about the theological training of the Pastors throughout the Solomon Islands. Please pray that more and more men and women will be able to attend her teaching sessions – that they might be better equipped to preach the gospel, and lead their congregations. What a joy it must be for Kay to hear, on subsequent visits, of all that is happening in the churches into which she has sown.

We hear Kay's name called as we wait for a plane at the airport. It is a man from a small village which she had visited some time ago. She related to us later that this village had not been helped or encouraged after the tsunami by anyone other than the people of the Wesleyan Methodist church in the area. Now, a Wesleyan congregation meets regularly and leaders there are seeking training and support (Kay had already organised to have children's Sunday School resources sent to them).

It is strange to hear Kay speaking so fluently in Pidgin English. She calls out to greet friends as they pass, and they chat so easily and warmly together. Her love for the people, her heart for the Solomon Islands and her great desire to be faithful and fruitful in her ministry is obvious. So too is the love and admiration that the people have for her.

As we walk together late one afternoon as the day is turning to night, we reflect on the beauty of the islands. It is hard to imagine the terror of the tsunami two years earlier, but we are sure the memories of that day are still raw in the people's minds. We rest on the jetty outside the local hotel and watch as people wander past – many lost without Jesus. This is where Kay's heart is.

Walking with Kay along the roads of Gizo for the short time that we were there, was a wonderful experience. Walking is known to do wonders for the body, and also for the soul. The time to think and ponder and talk together is such a privilege. One can't help but picture Jesus walking the dusty roads of earth with His disciples. As we walk with Kay she patiently answers our questions, and we enjoy the quiet and peace together.

But we are mindful at the same time, of all of the rough walks that Kay has endured and will undertake in the weeks and months ahead. Just as the roads in the Solomon Islands are rough - full of pot holes and bumps (If a vehicle can travel them, it will need suspension checks regularly!), and a mudpie maker's delight in the rains - so are the roads in Kay's life as she seeks to minister to the people. She will walk lonely roads and disappointing roads and frustrating roads, but we can walk with her and help her by our prayers each day, our sensitivity to God's spirit speaking to us about something we can do - maybe an AWSOM trip, a financial contribution to God's work through Kay, and our prayers for the fledgling denomination here in the Solomons.

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